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ABSTRACT

At the beginning of the spring 2000 semester, 19 sophomores enrolled in the Principles of Teaching class at Heidelberg College (Ohio) were asked to complete weekly e-mail journal entries about the course. At the end of the semester, they were asked to give their perceptions regarding journal use. Sixteen students completed this particular entry, and their responses composed the sample analyzed. Qualitative analysis of journal entries was done by coding journal text into major "thinking units," which were further broken down into subcategories and contextual text segments associated with each. The three general thinking units identified were: (1) technical issues related to electronic journals; (2) attitudes toward e-journaling; and (3) suggestions for changes in the e-journaling process. This paper examines the subcategories of the general thinking units and the specific student perceptions illustrating them. Results agree with the recent literature on the effectiveness of journaling in promoting an increase in student reflective capabilities. Modifications in journal use for the 2000-2001 school year as a result of the study and implications for future journal use, both in this class and as part of a broader longitudinal study on the efficacy of journaling, are also discussed. Appendices include an informed consent form, summary contents for each student, and a message to the class on journal entries. (Contains 30 references.) (Author/MES)

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ED 447 791

A Qualitative Study of Student Perceptions Regarding Electronic Journaling

A Paper Presented at the Annual Conference of the Mid-Western Educational Research Association in Chicago, IL, on October 26, 2000.

by

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Abstract

At the beginning of the Spring, 2000, semester, 19 sophomores enrolled in my EDU 220 (Principles of Teaching) class were asked to complete weekly e-mail journal entries about the course. At the end of the semester, in Journal #14, they were asked to give their perceptions regarding journal use in the course. Sixteen students completed this particular entry and their responses composed the sample analyzed. Qualitative analysis of journal entries was done by coding journal text into major "thinking units," which were further broken down into subcategories and contextual text segments associated with each. Text segments could be grouped into three main categories. The three general thinking units identified were: 1) technical issues related to electronic journaling; 2) attitudes toward electronic journaling; and 3) suggestions for changes in the e-journaling process. This paper focuses on a detailed examination of the subcategories of the general thinking units and the specific student perceptions illustrating them. Results agree substantially with the recent literature on the effectiveness of journaling in promoting an increase in student reflective capabilities. Modifications in journal use for the 2000-2001 school year as a result of the study and implications for future journal use, both in this class and as part of a broader longitudinal study on the efficacy of journaling in producing more reflective beginning teachers, is also discussed.

Objectives

The purposes of this study are 1) to describe student perceptions of electronic journaling as a pedagogical method in a core education class at Heidelberg College, and 2) to learn what changes might be needed to make e-journaling more effective in fostering student reflection about the act of teaching.

Perspective(s) and/or Theoretical Framework

With the aging of the profession the need for new teachers is rising. Many new teachers suffer "transition shock" on entering the classroom due to maintaining a "fantasy image" of what teaching will be like, even through their preservice field experiences. These high attrition rates among new teachers, and the demand by the public and politicians for better-trained teachers, require changes in teacher preparation methods. New teacher licensure programs in Ohio (and elsewhere) are an attempt to do that.

Education Department faculty members at Heidelberg College have spent countless hours over the past three years preparing the new licensure standards course offerings. The EDU 200 (Growth and Development) and EDU 220 (Principles of Teaching) courses have been developed to help students not only understand growth and development and its impact on how students learn but also the pedagogical principles behind learning and teaching. By combining journaling with the new coursework, we hope to increase the effect the new curriculum will have on helping our students develop a more realistic image of teaching. By producing entry-level teachers who have a more realistic image about teaching and the demands that will be placed

upon them, we are better preparing them for the summary evaluation they will undergo at the end of their entry year which will determine whether or not they are re-hired for the following year. It will also produce beginning teachers who will suffer less "transition shock" than their predecessors, as well as beginning teachers with better coping skills as they face their new world "behind the teacher's desk" as the teacher, instead of in front of it, as a student.

Current Heidelberg freshmen, sophomores, and juniors are under Ohio's new licensure standards, whereas seniors are completing their work under the more traditional, teacher certification standards. In an attempt to foster the personal reflection so necessary to meet Praxis and Pathwise mentoring standards, electronic journaling is seen as an important part of the curriculum in the EDU 220 (Principles of Teaching) class at the sophomore level at Heidelberg College. This study sought to learn if students were gaining from this pedagogical method what we, as preservice teacher educators, intended they should. We sought, through e-journaling, to demonstrate how reflective journaling can foster a deeper understanding of issues they will face as classroom teachers, thereby reducing the gap between their present "fantasy" stage image of teaching and what they will find when they begin teaching in their own classrooms after graduation.

This study is the initial stage of a longitudinal study of journaling as a way to foster continuous teacher reflection and, in essence, will be used as a baseline study for continued study of the sixteen students involved. Additional analysis of data from these

and future journals will be conducted to monitor development of the reflective process throughout their undergraduate and into their professional teaching careers.

Data Collection

Selection of Subjects

Sixteen sophomore-level students in EDU 220 (Principles of Teaching) during the Spring, 2000, semester at Heidelberg College were asked to do weekly, reflective journal entries, via e-mail. Each student signed a Consent Form (Appendix A) after receiving an explanation of the research plan. Students were assigned pseudonyms. Being a former science teacher, I chose to use the names for the Atlantic hurricanes for 2000 [http://www.usatoday.com/weather/ hurricane/2000/whurr00.htm] as participant pseudonyms. No correspondence should be inferred between the apparent ethnicity of a name and the ethnicity of the student for whom the name was used. Males were assigned supposed "male" hurricane names and females were assigned supposed "female" hurricane names, as set up by the creators of the name list, where "male" and "female" names alternate down the list. (I realize some of the names can be used by both genders but I didn't make up the list, and will leave that issue for others to argue about.)

Collection Methodology

The e-journal entry was originally due on Friday each week, but at student suggestion was moved to "by Sunday afternoon" to allow them more time to complete their entries. The topic for the weekly journal grew out of the class discussions of text or supplemental reading, guest speakers, or instructor-given topics. Students were also

told they were always free to include any other comments or questions about these issues or anything else they wanted a reaction to. Over the course of the semester this would mean I should have received fifteen e-mail messages from each student as a minimum, with a similar number of response messages from me, and other e-mails, as needed, to answer questions or elaborate on issues raised in previous messages.

For the purposes of this study, the entry titled Journal #14 was the key entry. Students were asked, in Journal #14, to write what they thought about the electronic journaling process. I avoided giving specifics as to what areas they should discuss, telling them to "say what they wanted to say" about the use of electronic journaling in this class.

Weekly journal entries were responded to as received and then moved to a separate, labeled folder in my Netscape® Messenger's Local Mail folder. Messages, and responses to them, were then printed out in hard-copy form for analysis. Figure 1 (next page) gives the total number of hard-copy messages printed. A computer "crash" over the summer led to a loss of some of my responses, but as this study focuses on student entries for Journal #14, regarding the use of e-journals, the loss of my responses is inconsequential.

Data Analysis

Methodology

Of the sixteen students in the class, three failed to submit a Journal #14 and thus are not included in the data analysis. I read each of their other entries for specific references to the journaling process and found none. Each of the remaining students'

Journal #14 entry was closely read and the responses recorded on a Summary form (Appendix B)

Figure 1: E-Mails, By Student

Name	# Sent From	# Replies To	Total Traffic
Alberto	16	15	31
Beryl	16	10	26
Chris	16	13	29
Debby	25	21	46
Ernesto	13	10	23
Florence	17	7	24
Gordon	10	7	17
Helene	13	10	23
Isaac	14	11	25
Joyce	15	14	29
Keith *	8	4	12
Leslie	13	8	21
Michael *	12	26	38
Nadine	16	17	33
Patty	17	11	28
Sandy *	10	8	18
Totals	231	192	423
Mean (Total / 16)	14.4	12.0	26.4

* No Journal #14 submitted

Each entry was then coded using the "open coding" technique of Strauss and Corbin (1990) to develop dimensionalized "thinking units" (Bogdan and Bicklin, 1992, 167-172) which were then searched for "contextual text segments" (Hofmann, 1995) that had meaning within the context of the thinking units identified. As these "thinking units" were identified, copies of the original Summary form were made and journal

entries (contextual text segments) not relating to that particular "thinking unit" were deleted, leaving a new summary form for each separate thinking unit or sub-unit identified. For some dimensionalized units, particularly the "Positive" and "Negative" comments, separate summaries were made for each category of associated contextual text segments.

Results

Three general thinking units identified were: 1) technical issues related to electronic journaling; 2) attitudes toward electronic journaling; and 3) suggestions for changes in the e-journaling process.

"Technical issues related to electronic journaling" focused on the related contextual text segments dealing with the 1) issues of time constraints, 2) question of electronic or hand-written journals, and 3) whether or not a topic was assigned.

"Attitudes toward electronic journaling" can be dimensionalized into several categories: reaction to e-journaling (dimensionalized as either "positive" or "negative.") "Positive" contextual text segments focused on e-journaling as 1) a valuable experience, 2) an aid to reflection, 3) their use to assess student growth, 4) a memory aid, 5) their use in giving students a voice on issues that will affect them, 6) an aid to better understanding, the value of feedback in the process, and 7) a commitment to using them in their own classrooms. "Negatives" can be categorized contextually as 1) remembrance issues, 2) motivation issues, 3) access issues, and 4) cognitive ability issues.

"Suggestions for changes in the e-journaling process" was a collection of items gleaned from the original Summary form which focused more on ways to eliminate the perceived "negatives" than a rejection of the e-journaling process itself.

"Technical issues related to electronic journaling"

Time Concerns

Eleven of the thirteen students completing the Journal #14 entry mentioned time concerns as a factor in journaling. Students were concerned about getting their journals submitted on time (Alberto - "always tried to get my comments in on time", Chris - "my late journals are not a bright idea on my behalf"), or forgetting to do them (Beryl - "people tend to neglect their e-mail journals" or Leslie - "often forgot that I am to do journal entry...just let the journal assignment slip my mind"). Busy students saw journaling as another chore they had to do (Nadine - "...it was just another thing to remember and mores work for me to do"). Some journal procrastinators tried to rationalize how late journals were actually good for them, personally (Gordon - "even if they're late, they are still useful" and Chris - "got more out of them by writing them at a later time...was forced to look back and re-think some of the issues that were posed in class"). These students were contrasted by others who say them as a way to improve communication, such as Beryl, who "liked the email journal better than the written one...really helped me keep up with it and I was less likely to fall behind," Joyce ("e-mail was a good idea because you can sit down and write a quick message and get a

response on it"), and Nadine ("it was an easy way to communicate with you if we had questions or concerns.")

E-mail or Paper?

Most students were positive about the use of e-journaling as opposed to a journal written out on paper. Several cited the ease of communication (Beryl - "felt more comfortable asking you questions and telling you my concerns...could just write it at the end of my journal and you would reply back", Ernesto - "give student a chance to ask any questions they did not remember to ask in class or any new questions that may come up outside of class", and Nadine - "may be some students that don't like to talk to a teacher face to face and they can write what they want down on paper and you can answer them back"). Leslie was equally appreciative of the speed of e-mail communiqués, admitting that she liked "the way we did it by e-mail this year, because I really hate writing journal entries." One negative expressed was a concern about students having computer access (Beryl - "not everyone has a computer 24 hours a day"). Florence thought that "by writing things down on paper, it enables people to keep their ideas fresh in their heads" while Helene wanted to see an option to e-journaling for those students who "are not articulate through e-mails or on paper...when they write it limits them too much."

Topic or No Topic?

Most students wanted a topic assigned for each entry (Helene - "[I] write better when I have a broad subject to write about" or Beryl - "[I] don't mind doing journals as long as some sort of topic is given out") while others saw it just the opposite, saying it

limited their responses (Helene - "Sometimes I am stifled when I have been assigned a topic that I do not care too much for...when I'm interested in a topic, I write much, much more"). Others saw the benefits of an assigned topic in a broader context (Patty - "would not have had the opportunity to really consider some of the journal topics if we had not been assigned to write journals").

"Attitudes toward electronic journaling"

Positives

Students perceive e-journaling as a valuable experience in their professional growth as preservice teachers (Alberto - "journals are the only way to really reflect on what the last weeks' classes were really about", Debby - "journaling has given me more responsibility to look at my information more thoroughly than I usually do" or Nadine - "even if they are a little extra work, they will help in the long run."). They are also seen as an aid to reflection (Debby - "has taught me to do a lot of reflection about what I have learned", Helene - "Journals are filled with personal meaning and things that inspire me to keep thinking positively", and Patty - "helped me get a better grasp on how I feel about teaching and different teaching philosophies"). Other students acknowledged their usefulness as an assessment tool (Alberto: "a good way to chart a student's growth in the classroom" or Ernesto - "you can find out if we do know the information we talked about in class"). Journals were also cited for their beneficial role in helping students remember what was discussed in class (Debby: "helps me remember the information longer and understand it better" or Chris - "was a good way to 'review' for the semester"). While the students themselves did not express it, their comments

indicated that they felt they were given a voice in the classroom (Beryl - "felt more comfortable asking you questions and telling you my concerns", Ernesto - "give student a chance to ask questions" and "sometimes a student may not want to ask a question in front of the entire class", Leslie - "has helped me grow as a person and express all my views and opinions in your class", and Nadine - "gave us a chance to express our feelings and give opinions on things and our ideas"). Deeper understanding of the material covered was another positive perception reported (Alberto - "students who don't do journals on time are really missing the point and are really not taking advantage of truly understanding the class", Debby - "I could gain more knowledge than I have now and realize that what I used to think does not fit what I believe in now", and Patty - "they did require careful thought" and "[journals] offered me the opportunity to really think about the ideas Mr. J---- (a guest classroom speaker) presented"). Immediacy of feedback was also perceived as a positive consequence of e-journaling (Beryl - "allows me to get your feedback as well as [give] my own" and Joyce - "you can sit down and write a quick message and get a response on it"). Some students were so sold on the idea they had decided it was something they would use in their own classrooms (Alberto - "definitely something I would like to incorporate in my classroom", Florence - "awesome idea and can really help out in the classroom", and Nadine - "I will have my students have a journal to help communication between us.")

Negatives

Some students sometimes found it hard to remember to do their journals each week (Chris - "I have neglected to do write my journals on a weekly basis" and Leslie -

"often forgot that I am to do journal entries...just let the journal assignment slip my mind"). Lack of motivation was also a problem for some (Debby - "at times journals can begin to get old" or Helene - "there are...times when I have been completely uninspired to do anything at all"). Related to the issue of motivation was the aforementioned issue of having a topic on which to write. Beryl didn't "mind doing journals as long as some topic is given out" whereas Helene, who admitted to writing "better when I have a broad subject to write about", also said she sometimes felt "stifled" when the topic wasn't to her liking. Two students expressed concern about access (Beryl - "not everyone has access to a computer 24 hours a day") and ease of use (Florence - "not sure about the e-mail thing...know it's easier for you to organize and grade, but I think it's more difficult to use in class."). A final "negative" was that some students felt that the careful reflection sought in the e-journal entries might be beyond the capability of some students in the class. Helene opined "not all students are able to put forth that much effort or reflection upon what they are learning" and sought an option for "those who are not articulate through e-mails." Addressing the same issue, Joyce thought that there shouldn't be any minimum length requirement on the e-journals because they "should be your thoughts, whether they be way in-depth or not at all."

"Suggestions for changes in the e-journaling process"

Most of the student suggestions have been cited in the preceding sections, so I will briefly summarize them here. While students generally liked using e-journals, they wanted a topic to write on, although a broad enough topic to allow them some flexibility. They also wanted to have some journals that were open to any topic of their

own choosing. They wanted the immediate feedback generally associated with e-mail, an area where I admit both to having been less than speedy at times and not as detailed in my responses as I would have liked. They also didn't want any length requirement. Another roundabout suggestion was that delayed e-journaling might also have its uses as it would give students more time for reflection and making connections with either previously discussed material or follow-up discussions in later classes.

Discussion

Previous studies related to hand-written journals (or at least, the journals were submitted on paper) have indicated the effectiveness of journaling in getting students to interact with the material being studied and to create a personal meaning of the experience (Hughes, Kanevsky, and Kooy, 1997) and monitoring student teacher perceptions of how they view the instructional process, developing a professional relationship with students and a more holistic attitude towards classroom management (Wilson and Cameron, 1996). Lee (1997) reported their use in English classes to record personal attempts at meaning making and as a tool for self-assessment, whereas Halbach (1999) used student journals to evaluate a methods class they were taking. Walden (1995) reported on the use of journaling by women as a way to promote their personal growth as "knowers." Similarly, Norwood and Carter (1994) report the successful use of journals in teaching mathematics to children. Other researchers report its use with student teachers in improving preservice Music teachers' perceptions of teaching (Fredrickson and Pembrook, 1999) and their understanding of cultural diversity (Kea and Bacon, 1999). Moon (1999) has provided advice for college

teachers on how to implement journaling in college classes and Dieker and Monda-Amaya (1995) have suggested a classification system for evaluating reflective journals and using the information learned to more effectively work with preservice teachers to promote their critical reflection on their field and classroom experiences. Both Crippen and Brooks (2000) and Patton, Agaranzo, & Woods (1997) report success using journaling successfully in nursing education to improve integration of classroom and clinical learning, decision-making skills and the level of skill acquisition. Crippen and Brooks, however, report on students' use of Personal Digital Assistants to create journals that could be sent via e-mail to their supervisors, thereby improving the communication between the two. Von Holzen (1996) reported a study indicating the effectiveness of using e-mail journals as a way of promoting more communication between students and their teachers, claiming that students who wrote the e-mail journals wrote significantly longer journal entries than students doing conventional journals by hand.

The results with this study are wholly consistent with results in the literature related to journaling. Black, Prater & Sileo (2000), Carter (1998), Connor-Greene (2000), Goldsby & Cozza (1998), Liebars)(1999), and Vogt and Vogt (1999) report results citing gains in student learning and the fostering deeper understanding, with journals providing a structure for promoting thinking and reflecting, and allowing for more immediate feedback from professors and field supervisors, as well as giving students a voice in the student teaching process, and serving to integrate classroom and field experiences more completely, thus increasing students' perceptions of the value of

the course to them personally. Casey and Roth, as quoted in Vogt and Vogt (2000, p. 82) report an increased level of teacher-student communication when electronic journals are used. They also cite a study by McIntyre and Tlusty (p. 82) that student enthusiasm for e-mail journals was affected by computer access, as my own student, Beryl, mentioned. Griffin (1997) makes the case that teacher education programs who do not make students conscious of their need for reflection are not turning out educators, but rather, technicians who follow orders and lack the reflective practice that promotes originality.

Implications for Departments of Education

The implication is fairly obvious that journaling is a very useful tool for promoting the kind of critical reflection we seek in our student teachers. My students' perceptions as to the value of journaling are consistent with the published literature. They perceive the process as 1) valuable, 2) an aid to reflection, 3) a tool for self-assessment of their own growth, 4) a memory aid, 5) a way of expressing their own views and opinions (their "student voice"), and 6) an aid to deeper understanding. Several were enthusiastic enough about its value that they voluntarily have made a commitment to use journaling with their own students. And even though they sometimes had trouble remembering to do the journals, and sometimes had problems getting computer access or being motivated enough to write a lot, they still thought that it was worth the time it took to do them.

Student recommendations on how to improve the process were implemented this Fall. Journals are due "sometime Sunday" in order to give me time to read and respond

to them before class time on Tuesday afternoon. This has been well-received by this year's students. I provided a topic for the first journal entry and made the second one an "open" topic. It turned out to be a major "gripe session" about the field placements for this Fall, but served a very useful purpose in giving students who were "in a fog" a chance to get some things cleared up...things they were too shy to ask about in class or to me face-to-face. I have also made it clear that even when there is a topic given, students are encouraged to comment on whatever they wish, ask questions, or discuss other items in addition to their writing on the topic for that week. This was also well-received by the class. Following Chandler's recommendations (1997) journals are not graded, ***per se***, but students receive a set number of points for doing each entry and the journals, as a set, are a large component of the grade for the course. Students also thought that this was "fair." We also discussed a better way of recordkeeping so that students would have an adequate record of their journaling in hardcopy for their course portfolios. I have also indicated that late journals will still be accepted, but I really didn't want more than a week to pass before they wrote one. However, if they wanted to revisit that issue at a later date, in a later journal entry, that would be fine. And I, in turn, I have also made a personal commitment to them to be more efficient at returning my comments to their journals.

Remaining unresolved was the issue that some students may not be "up to the task" of doing a reflective journal and perhaps an alternative task might need to be allowed. No one has brought this up as an issue this Fall and the limited number of journals received so far indicate students are doing quite well in reflecting about the

class. Perhaps the better introduction I gave to the "how's" of journaling paid off and there was less confusion about what was expected of students. Appendix C is a copy of an e-mail I sent to each member of the class, describing what I wanted from the journals. Student response in class indicated the mailing had been successful in clearing up some questions they had. Their own questions in their second journal entry also "lifted the fog" for others.

In conclusion, I am sold on the idea of reflective journaling. It takes a lot of work by students' and a lot of work by me to make it work. But the results I'm seeing make it worth the effort. I am pondering expanding the use of journaling to an interactive LISTSERV for class members (following some of the ideas about collaborative journaling in Parkyn, 1999). Previous studies have advocated the continued use of journals throughout student teachers' preservice experience and into their entry year into the profession (e.g. Griffin, 1983; Kagan, 1992; and Pigge & Marso, 1987). Data from the author's own dissertation study (Corley, 1998) showed the value of journaling during the entry year as a way of personal reflection and "meaning making" of the first-year experience. The longitudinal study, of which this is the beginning, will explore the usefulness of journaling through the rest of these students' undergraduate studies and into their initial employment in the schools. If our hypothesis is correct, these beginning teachers will be better prepared to cope with the realities of school life than their predecessors and be the kind of teachers we want them to be.

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Appendix A
Informed Consent

I, (print your name)_____ agree to participate in the research being conducted by Dr. Ed Corley, an Assistant Professor of Education at Heidelberg College. The purpose of this research is to study changes in ideas, attitudes, and thinking about the profession of teaching, how I see myself as a teacher, concerns I have about becoming a teacher, and the development of reflective thinking on the profession of teaching.

Data will be collected periodically by the following means:

- Journals, using e-mailed journal entries, some of which will be written on topics of my own choosing, some on topics requested by Dr. Corley;
- Essays written at the request of Dr. Corley and e-mailed to his campus e-mail address;
- Surveys/Questionnaires;
- Statistical and/or demographic data maintained by the Education Department at Heidelberg College; and
- Personal interviews with Dr. Corley.

I understand that the current study is part of a longitudinal study that will continue throughout my time at Heidelberg and into my first teaching assignment upon graduation.

I have been informed that it is my right to withdraw from the study at any time, although Dr. Corley does reserve the right for an "exit interview" or a final piece of written work to conclude my participation. My participation, or non-participation, will have nothing to do with any grade assigned by Dr. Corley for any course work I may take with him. Dr. Corley has also agreed to never reveal my identity nor release any information that would possibly reveal my identity, without express written permission from me. He has my permission to use data obtained from or about me as a part of any written or verbal report, presentation, article, or book, as long as my right to confidentiality is maintained.

Dr. Corley has also stipulated that results of the study will be available to me upon request once my participation in the study is concluded and the data have been analyzed.

_____ _____

Signature of student Signature of researcher

_____

Date signed

Appendix B

Student	Summary Comments
Alberto 4/2700 (Male)	• journals are the only way to really reflect on what the last week's past classes were really about • always tried to get my journals in on time while the week's classes were fresh in my head along with ideas to put in the journals • students who don't do the journals on time are really missing the point and are really not taking advantage of truly understanding the class • definitely something I would like to incorporate in my classroom...have the children write on a different topic every other day and then on the other days have them do some freelance writing...write in any style or genre they feel like...as long as it is creative and enjoyable for me to read • good way to chart a student's growth in the classroom, not only in wiring style but also in physical, social, emotional, and mental growth
Beryl 5/2/00 (Female)	• there were positive and negative things about doing journals • liked being able to reflect on things we did in class • allows me to get your feedback as well as [give] my own • felt more comfortable asking you questions and telling you my concerns...could just write it at the end of my journal and you would reply back • liked the email journal much better than the written one...really helped me keep up with it and I was less likely to fall behind • couple of things I didn't like...when I really didn't have that much to write about and you hadn't given us a topic • hard for me to remember to do a journal by Friday and am glad that you gave us a few extra days to do them • not everyone has access to a computer 24 hours a day • don't mind doing journals as long as some sort of topic is given out
Chris 4/28/00 (Male)	• weekly assignment of journals is a very good idea • Although I have neglected to write my journals on a weekly basis, I have written all of them on the subjects that were at hand • not sure if the way I wrote them was the best way, but I do see some advantages of writing them in the way that I did • for me, personally, I got more out of the journals by writing them at a later time..was forced to look back and re-think about some of the issues that were posed in class • was a good way to "review" for the semester • will admit that it was sometimes hard to remember the exact discussions, but after reviewing handouts from those days, I think I obtained a deeper and better understanding of many topics posed in class • my late journals are not a very bright idea on my behalf, but I think there some advantages that come of my tardy work
Debby 4/29/00 (Female)	• something I have done quite frequently this semester and I think that I have become fairly good at reflecting my knowledge • has taught me to do a lot of reflection about what I have learned • really good thing... is to look back on what I have learned

Debby **(Cont.)**	• helps me remember the information longer and understand it better • can look back on what I have done and familiarize myself with the information again • at times journals can begin to get old, but in the long run I am sure I will appreciate them • down the road I will look back on my journals and be able to look up something that I may have forgotten • I could gain more knowledge than I have now and realize that what I used to think does not fit what I believe in now • journaling has given me more responsibility to look at my information more thoroughly than I usually do
Ernesto **4/28/00** **(Male)**	• writing journals weekly has been a great thing • acts as an assessment...you can find out if we do know the information we talked about in class • give student a chance to ask any questions that they did not remember to ask in class or any new questions that may come up outside of class • sometimes a student may not want to ask a question in front of the entire class and journaling allows the student to ask the question
Florence **4/28/00** **(Female)**	• journals are an awesome idea and can really help out in the classroom (i.e. class discussions) • not sure about the e-mail thing...know it's easier for you to organize and grade, but I think it's more difficult to use in class • people tend to neglect their e-mail journal entries • by writing things down on paper, it enables people to keep their ideas fresh in their heads
Gordon **5/1/00** **(Male)**	• journals help out • even if they are late, they are still useful as they give a nice review of the material • hard to remember to do journals • once you begin to teach daily journals could be done at the end of each school day...last five minutes of time • discuss the effectiveness of teaching strategies and also make comments on student achievement and behavior for developing patterns
Helene **4/27/00** **(Female)**	• journals are important in helping some students along within a class • Not all students are able to put forth that much effort or reflection upon what they are learning • Some students are more able to express how they feel with words, others, by actions • there are times when I have been greatly compelled to write these journals...times when I have been completely uninspired to do anything at all • write better when I have a broad subject to write about, especially when I can incorporate what I have been learning in the field • do my best writing when I combine my academic and social skills and knowledge • journals are filled with personal meaning and things that inspire me to keep thinking positively when things go wrong in the field, or in classes • Sometimes, I think journaling should be optional...another option should be offered those who are not as articulate through e-mails or on paper...when they are to write, it limits them too much

Helene **(Cont.)**	• Sometimes I am stifled when I have been assigned a topic that I do not care too much for...when I am interested in a topic, I write much, much more • journals have let me write about a variety of subjects, some of little interest and others that I can always write about
Isaac **4/28/00** **(Male)**	• ability to reflect • (allow me to express) feelings and concerns • Useful now and in the future • Writing about issues will help in the long run • like fact you respond to our entries with some thought and concern • feedback on what I write will help me make decisions about future situations • helps with remembering different activities • useful for developing teachers to take part in
Joyce **4/28/00** **(Female)**	• I did like them, but sometimes it was difficult pulling ideas out to say • helpful for reflecting • email idea was good because you can sit down and write a quick message and get a response on it • don't think that the entries should have to be so long...should be your thoughts, whether they be way in-depth or not at all
Keith **(Male)**	**(No Journal #14 Submitted)**
Leslie **4/27/00** **(Female)**	• cannot say I totally disliked them, because that is not true, but they are not one of my favorite things to do • often forgot that I am to do journal entries...just let the journal assignment slip my mind • did find this assignment helpful throughout the semester • helped me remember a lot of what was going on • will appreciate having all of the entries in my portfolio for professional and personal reasons • like that we did it by e-mail this year, because I really hate writing journal entries • has helped me grow as a person and express all my views and opinions in your class • suggestion would be to allow us to just have a few times through the semester to just email about whatever it was we were thinking in terms of something [having to do with] with education at that time...would relieve a lot of people's anxieties and feelings about situations that maybe they do not want to voice in class • Overall, I do think that the journals were worth it and I do think I will be really glad that I have them to look over in the future • is an assignment of meaning and worth and should be kept in use
Michael **(Male)**	**(No Journal #14 Submitted)**
Nadine **4/27/00** **(Female)**	• At first I didn't really like the idea of doing a weekly journal because it was just another thing to remember and more work for me to do, but I really like the idea now • helps me remember what we did in class that week...if you need to remember what you did in the past then you can look back at your journal and it will give you an idea • it was an easy way to communicate with you if we had any questions or concerns • gave us a chance to express our feelings and give opinions on things and our ideas

Nadine **(Cont.)**	• when I am a teacher I will have my students have a journal to help the communication between us. • I think that there may be some some students that don't like to talk to a teacher face to face and they can write what they want down on paper and then you can answer them back • in conclusion, I do like the journal now, even if they are a little extra work, they will help in the long run
Patty **4/27/00** **(Female)**	• At first thought...I felt that journaling each week had helped not really helped me to learn any new information • feel that I have to pretend to be stupid and pretend that I "learned" something • as I read my journals from the first thirteen weeks of class. I realized that we had covered a lot of material and I had been forced to extend my ideas through journaling • they did require careful thought • probably would not have had the opportunity to really consider some of the journal topics if we had not been assigned to write journals • helped me get a better grasp on how I feel about teaching and different teaching philosophies...first time we have ever talked about the strengths and weaknesses of each approach • offered me the opportunity to really think about the ideas Mr. J. (a guest classroom speaker) presented in his two visits to the classroom
Sandy **(Female)**	**(No Journal #14 Submitted)**

Appendix C

Subject: Journals
Date: Thu, 21 Sep 2000 10:46:08 -0400
From: Ed Corley <ecorley@heidelberg.edu>
To: EDU 220 Class

Class:

Just thought a general message to everyone would get us organized on the journal entries I want each week, so here goes.

First, as to the question "What should a journal entry be like?", I have this response, in the form of a metaphor. In sports broadcasting terminology, there is the "play by play" person and the "color commentator." The "play by play" announcer gives a blow by blow description of what happens throughout the game and at the end of the game he wraps up, providing the highlights of what happened. If you have paid attention during the game, you know all this for yourself. It doesn't need repeating. The "color commentator", on the other hand, gives information that relates what's happening on the field to the broader context of "the game", either this game as an entity into itself, or from the season-long or franchise-long historical perspective. The color commentator discusses the meaning of what you've seen, adding their own perspective and creating a "holistic" picture of the game and exploring the significance of what went on. How will this game impact the future? How was the outcome affected by the events of the past? What lessons can be learned so the team can improve in the future?

So, in your journals, I want you to be "color commentators" on the issues raised in the text or by me or your classmates and the discussions we had in class. It may well be that we didn't get all sides of an issue thoroughly discussed to your satisfaction or perhaps you didn't get to offer an argument in class due to lack of time. The journal is a way for you to continue the discussion, albeit with me, unless you do a mailing to everyone (something the mail.heidelberg system doesn't support yet). I want to read your reactions to what we did, not a litany of "we did this, then we did that, and then we did something else, etc." Use the journals to "get something off your chest", either about our discussions, or simply how the class is going. The journal is to be a considered reflection of the meaning you're making from the class work and discussions. Developing the habit of continual reflection and meaning-making is one of the most important goals I have for journaling.

Second, "Is there a topic for this week?" I will leave the topic for Journal #2 open. (Remember that Journal #1 was regarding the issue of how you, as a teacher, can avoid letting your personal biases interfere with your getting to know your students better.) You might reflect on the class, so far, and try to describe anything that you've learned that you think surprised you or gave you some insight into teaching that you had never quite thought about before.

Third, "Do we do separate journals for the class and the project work?"

1. I want an individual journal from everyone, each week, about class business. I would prefer the journal entry be sent by Sunday evening so I can have the opportunity to respond to them and you can get the response back prior to the next class meeting.

2. Each TEAM should send me a separate e-mail at least once a week, telling me what is going on regarding your project work. It could discuss classroom observations you've made or collaborative work you're doing with the teacher. I just want to know that you are doing something, each week, even when not in the field, to advance your curriculum project along. It will also give you a chance to ask questions about the project that we haven't got time to discuss in class. If a question comes up that is generic to all other teams, I can reply via a "mass e-mailing" to the class as a whole, similar to this message. A separate e-mail from the team will make organizing your portfolio easier at the end of the semester.

Fourth, "Is there some format for the journal we should follow?" I would suggest that in the "Subject" line of the e-mail message you write: EDU 220 Journal ## (mm/dd/yy) This will allow me to keep track of them more easily and see that you get credit for them and make it easier for me to respond to in a timely manner. If you all use this format, the journals from each student for each week will all show up under one cascading paragraph listing on my computer's INBOX and not get lost in the shuffle of e-mail messages I receive every day.

Fifth, "What should we do with our e-mails?" Print out a copy of every e-mail you send me, and also print out a copy of my reply. I will try to make sure that my replies will have a copy of the message you sent included. That way, you will have a complete hard-copy file of everything you send me and I send you over the course of the semester. These e-mails will become part of your portfolio at the end.

Sixth, "How much do the e-mails count?" Each one completed, showing the kind of reflection I want to see, as outlined in the first paragraph above, will be worth 10 points. The syllabus describes the "weighting" percentage that will be given e-mails in your overall grade.

If you have any other questions, e-mail me at the address above, and I will try to get back to you ASAP. I would also suggest you print out this message for future reference. I'm looking forward to everyone completing the Journal #1 entries and sending along their Journal #2 entries by Sunday evening, September 24.

--Dr. C.